

# **‘The price of peace’**

By: Spc. Lalita Laksbergs

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**NASHVILLE, Tennessee** – The success of a Soldier depends on their physical and mental fortitude and strength. The family of a Soldier has to be just as strong. An Illinois teen’s song about a military family’s sacrifice for its Soldier caught the ears of music producers in Nashville, Tenn., and will be released in the near future to raise funds for Soldier support groups.

“Music goes to the heart,” said Alyssa Gaddis, the 12-year-old singer / songwriter from Springfield, Ill. “Families have to stay strong for the Soldiers and I think this song shows what emotions families go through.”

Alyssa isn’t alone in her appreciation of the military and lending her voice to this cause. Cassy Baddis, Alyssa’s older sister, has performed with her sister for the last five years.

They both have a common bond with the military as their father is a member of the Illinois Army National Guard, Command Chief Warrant Officer (5) Jim Gaddis. “We have been really lucky that our dad has not been deployed, but we see families at ceremonies that affect us,” said Cassy, a 16-year-old student at Sacred Heart Griffin High School in Springfield.

Alyssa wrote the song as a tribute to the sacrifices the military families make and the emotions they experience as they see their Soldier leave and then return from deployment.

“The title of the song, ‘The Price of Peace’ really says it all,” said Alyssa. “It really tells the tale of a girl saying goodbye to her dad and realizing what it all means and waiting for the time when he returns.” Hart Steen, music producer and singer/ songwriter, coordinated the recording efforts and production of this project.

“I met the girls’ parents downtown (Nashville) on a songwriting night and they confronted me afterwards with some ideas, sent me an e-mail and we went from there,” said Steen, a Nashville resident. “I thought it was a really great idea. In country music you hear a lot of patriotic songs, but no one writes from the perspective of a young girl, to the family. That was what really appealed to me.”

Steen’s brother is in the U.S. Air Force, which allowed him to bring a stronger connection to the song.

“When I saw my younger brother at basic training graduation, he was more than just a brother; he became both a brother and a friend,” remembered Steen teary-eyed. “He was not younger, not older...it was just respect. It has been a huge plus for my family.

My brother went overseas and it was a huge thing to let him go and have him be gone. I don't know if I would give that up because of what I felt when he came back home," he said.

Although this is not the first formal production of a song by Cassy and Alyssa, Steen believes it has great potential to highlight the strength of family support of Soldiers.

"I think it's going to be awesome," said Steen. "I don't believe it is a song's job to sell itself. The message is going to make the people really enjoy it."

Over the next few weeks the song will be mixed and engineered to complete the recording process and then will be made available for downloadable purchase online at [www.thepriceofpeace.org](http://www.thepriceofpeace.org).

All proceeds will be given to Family Readiness Groups (FRGs) by distribution from a local Veterans of Foreign Wars posts.

FRGs are the target benefactors because they are a source of support, information, and assistance to the Soldiers and their families.

They are made up of caring people The family tribute song could not have been possible without the support and sponsorship of the recording by State Farm Insurance Companies.

Through meetings with the Employee Support of Guard and Reserve (ESGR) and military contacts, State Farm Insurance was presented the family tribute song concept and eagerly provided support.

State Farm Insurance Companies was nationally recognized in September as a military friendly employer and supporter of the Guard and Reserve.

The Gaddis family traveled to Nashville in September to record voice tracks at the Creative Caffeine recording studio. Hart Steen, music producer and singer/ songwriter, coordinated the recording efforts and production of this project.

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They are made up of caring people who work together to provide accurate information pertaining to their units or organizations and provide support. FRGs are not just family members working together, but also Soldiers, community representatives, and the unit’s chain of command. Each of these groups benefit from FRGs.

“There’s a bigger reason for all of this,” shared Alyssa. “Music should touch people and I only hope this keeps on going and going. The families need that support.”